MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

18 MARCH 1983

Syria-Lebanon

Soviet Support for Syria, Missile Deployment -- During a meeting with Syrian Ambassador to the USSR Muhammad 'Ali al-Haliabi, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko expressed the USSR's "continued determination to support the defense capabilities of Syria, considering it the main front facing imperialism and Zionism in the Middle East," Damascus radio reported.

Soviet Ambassador to Lebanon Aleksandr Soldatov's recent statement that the USSR would intervene in the event of a war between Israel and Syria gives a "more serious nature to the presence of Soviet missiles and advisers in Syria" and must arouse international concern about the risk of Syria's becoming a "completely Soviet satellite and receiving defense from Moscow if war breaks out," Israeli sources cited by Jerusalem radio asserted. A MA'ARIV commentary said the Soviet envoy's statement "has nothing new in it at all" and confirms previous Soviet commitments to Syria.

Claiming that Syria is facing an imminent Israeli attack, Fatah Central Committee member Salah Khalaf warned Israel not to discount the possibility of Soviet intervention in the event that it decides to attack Syria. According to KUNA, Khalaf told the KUWAIT TIMES that PLO forces would "definitely" fight alongside the Syrians in the event of such an attack.

Security Situation -- Voice of Lebanon radio reported that the Syrian military command recently withdrew the remaining SAM-6's from the Al-Biqa' area. According to informed sources, Soviet and Syrian experts recently dismantled five bases for SAM-6's, moved these batteries inside Syrian territory, and deployed "dummy missiles" in their place "to deceive reconnaissance operations," the radio added. The clandestine Radio Free Lebanon claimed that, according to "official information" which has become available to the Lebanese Government, Syria intends to implement an operation to partition Al-Biqa' by bringing in armed Iranian groups to join the "Husayn al-Musawi group" and to declare an "Islamic statelet in Ba'labaak and Al-Hirmil." The radio added that the Iranians distributed leaflets on 17 March calling on the Lebanese Army to leave Ba'labaak and urging Shi'ite soldiers to join the "Islamic movement."

In another development an Italian soldier from the multinational force was wounded when an Italian patrol tried to stop a minibus near the Sabra refugee camp, AFP reported. Meanwhile, Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Arens toured Lebanon and "begged" IDF commanders to refrain from incidents with U.S. Marines "as far as possible," Jerusalem radio noted. According to another radio report, the U.S. Marines' commander said there has been no direct threat by IDF soldiers against his men.

U.S. Proposals -- Israeli Foreign Minister Yitzhaq Shamir briefed Prime Minister Menahem Begin on U.S. proposals for solving the problem of security arrangements in southern Lebanon, Jerusalem radio reported. The radio added that the proposals will be raised at the 20 March Israeli Cabinet session.

Libya

Objecting to Western media reports that Libya has decided to pursue its "exiled" citizens who are hostile to Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi's government, JANA claimed that a General People's Congress decision had been distorted. JANA reported that the Congress decision regarding "the elements that have fled" Libya established a committee to call upon Libyans abroad to return to their homeland and noted that "the door for repentance is open. The decision also stressed that "all necessary measures" will be taken to urge various countries not to assist "the deluded group that deals with the

enemies" of the Libyan people. Otherwise, the Libyan people will "be free to do the same toward these countries through all available means."

Libyan-Soviet talks led by Staff Major 'Abd as-Salam Ahmad Jallud and Council of Ministers Chairman Nikolay Tikhonov began in Moscow, JANA reported. The discussions focused on bilateral relations and ways to strengthen existing cooperation, JANA noted.

Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab-UK Relations -- Following his visit to the FRG, Jordan's King Husayn arrived in London to head the Arab seven-member committee delegation during its meeting with the British prime minister and senior British officials, Amman radio reported. Earlier, Damascus radio noted that Syrian Foreign Minister 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam left Damascus for London to participate in the Arab committee delegation.

Jerusalem Committee Meeting -- Morocco's King Hassan II, in his capacity as chairman of the Jerusalem Committee, has called for an extraordinary meeting of the committee in view of the "grave situation" resulting from repeated "aggressions" against Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem, Rabat radio announced.

PLO Affairs

Death of Israeli POW's -- PLO deputy military commander Khalil al-Wazir affirmed that two Israeli POW's held by the Palestinian resistance were killed recently by Israeli troops in Lebanon when they opened fire on a Palestinian vehicle near Beirut, according to AFP. Al-Wazir did not indicate if the Israeli POW's were captured recently or if they were two of the eight POW's who have been detained since last summer. The PLO official announced that negotiations on the exchange of POW's with Israel are deadlocked because of Israel's refusal to give the PLO a list of prisoners detained in the Ansar camp or a list of the estimated 400 Palestinians who were transferred to Israel, the agency noted.

'Arafat Activities -- PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat returned to Tunis following a brief visit to North Yemen during which he met with YAR President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih and discussed areas of cooperation between the Palestinian and Yemeni revolutions as well as the latest developments in the Palestinian question, SPA and San'a' radio reported.

Diplomatic Status -- The CSSR and Japan have decided to upgrade the status of PLO representation to the ambassadorial level, Damascus and Baghdad radios announced.

Iran

Petroleum Minister Mohammad Gharazi stated that Iran "cannot accept" the $29 oil price, Tehran radio reported citing Gharazi's remarks on his return from London. He added that Iran will determine a "reduction" in its oil price in accordance with its war costs.

In another development three members of the Peykar opposition group were executed by the authorities in Esfahan on 10 March, according to a prosecutor's office statement broadcast by Esfahan radio.

Iraq

A delegation led by National Assembly Speaker Na'im Haddad left for a visit to the USSR at the invitation of the Supreme Soviet Presidium, INA announced.

Israeli-Egyptian Relations

Egypt has promised to resume granting licenses for importation of goods from Israel, IDF Radio reported citing the director of the Israeli Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

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KARMAL ADDRESSES 'ARMED GROUPS LEADERS' 13 MARCH

LD161726 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1630 GMT 15 Mar 83

["Edited" speech by President Babrak Karmal to "leaders of armed groups" at Salam Khana Hall on 13 March -- recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of Almighty God. Brother compatriots, first of all, I sincerely welcome your arrival in Kabul, capital of the revolutionary DRA. [applause]

On behalf of the PDPA, the National Fatherland Front [NFF], and DRA Revolutionary Council and its Presidium, the government, and particularly myself, once again, from the bottom of my heart, welcome and congratulate you on joining your government, the bosom of the NFF, the bosom of your people, of the party and revolution.

As for relations between individuals and government, a government that is the servant of the people, a national and democratic government, will never use weapons against its people, its nation, unless forced to do so. With the April Revolution, we said Afghanistan is free and independent, with its flag hoisted throughout the world. [applause]

Toiling, noble, and Muslim people of Afghanistan, the DRA Government will never allow any devilish force in the world to teach us the lessons of Islam. Afghans directed others in the path of Islam. History records this fact.

From the very beginning, there were two kinds of Islam, one genuine, real, and Mohammadan Islam, and the other, hypocritical Islam. There have always been these two courses of Islam.

Today, there is a kind of Islam followed by the Americans, imperialists Chinese and their puppets, and the reactionaries of the world. The other one is the real and genuine Islam and Afghanistan stands in the fore of this kind of Islam. [applause]

From the time that our party was being formed, and until now, we have been pledging to practice what we believe. What are these things? They are truth. We have struggled to follow the path of truth, right, and justice. We are struggling and will struggle to the end. [applause]

We sincerely believe in our noble, brave, and toiling people. Our people, in solidarity with their national government, will defend Afghanistan together. They will defend the freedom and independence of Afghanistan and will build a developed, blossoming, proud, and independent Afghanistan. [applause]

During the time of the liberating revolution of the people of Afghanistan, when we wanted to create a rich, strong, powerful and progressive Afghanistan, the ruling circles of our enemies adopted positions against Afghanistan because they feared the liberating revolution of Afghanistan. A friend [words indistinct] said that if the new stage had not come on 27 December then on 29 December, Gulbuddin, with the assistance of Hafizullah Amin, would have taken power. In other words, with the assistance of the United States, Pakistan, and the PRC, he would have taken power in Afghanistan. We had secret information to the effect that the destiny of Afghanistan was in the balance. It was planned that part of Afghanistan, up to the Hindu Kush, would be brought under the influence of Pakistan; another part would be brought under the influence of the West; another part, comprising Badakhshan and Takhar, would be brought under the influence of the PRC; and a CIA-installed government, under Hafizullah Amin and the henchmen of Gulbuddin's party, would take over Kabul. The other plan was that Afghanistan would cease to be a country on the globe.

The defense of the revolution and of the people is one side of the issue. The issue of Afghanistan, our homeland, our pride, our national independence, our territorial integrity, and our homeland, was in the balance. When the honest sons of the people of Afghanistan perceived the (?plan) of Hafizullah Amin and discovered its direction and inclination, they began underground activities whereupon Amin was toppled. [applause]

What was the U.S. plan? In collaboration with the so-called leaders of bands, ringleaders, and kings who are created in the United States and live in Pakistan, they and their commandos -- were prepared to enter Afghanistan by land via Pakistan and be dropped by parachute.

Earlier, the Revolutionary Council, after concluding the friendship treaty with the USSR, which was registered in the United Nations, invited the USSR, in accordance with Article 52 of the UN Charter, to come to the aid of Afghanistan because of the danger directed by reaction and imperialism from the soil of Pakistan and China. However, the USSR always replied that we should try to solve our problems with the people of Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan can defend the revolution in their country.

But, unfortunately and regrettably, our people and our compatriots at that time fled to the mountains. There was no other [words indistinct].

If this action had not been carried out then, and had the timely assistance of the USSR not arrived, not only would a bloody civil war have started but the prestige, honor, freedom, and independence of Afghanistan would have been lost.

This was one side of the (?problem). The other side was that a major international war would have begun in the region or even in the world.

Here I must mention another important point to our brother compatriots. The Americans, as at the time of fascist Hitler, are making war threats everywhere, in every corner of the world, to bring about crises. They encourage Israel in the Middle East. They are doing the same in America, Africa, and Asia. One of these corners is Afghanistan. They want to start a war here.

When a government is created and a revolution takes place, the government, undoubtedly, has duties. It is our desire for local governments, on the basis of jirgas and councils, to be created nationwide in Afghanistan. That is to say, in each village, subdistrict, district, and province, the people should gather together. On the basis of traditional sessions, jurgas, and national consultations, they will solve their problems, and even find among them the most intelligent and efficient person to govern the subdistrict, or join a presidium of 10 or 15 persons to consult and counsel each other and solve the problems of their region. [applause]

This is the aspiration of the party, of the NFF. God willing, you may apply for membership, which, of course, is voluntary; it is not by force or threat.

The aspiration of the April Revolution, particularly the new stage of the April Revolution, is that when we say the national government, the people themselves should control their government. [applause] We then would be able to form a loya jirga or great council comprising representatives from all parts of Afghanistan, without discrimination, from all tribes and nationalities of Afghanistan, including Pashtuns, Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras, Turkmens, Nuristanis, Baluchis, and so forth. Let all of them attend a great council and form their government, whether they call it presidium or president of the presidium or president. They themselves can form their government in the framework of the NFF, with the help and under the leadership of the PDPA, which is your servant. [applause]

We all should come together in the bosom of the homeland in an atmosphere of peace, brotherhood, equality, reconciliation, and Islam and begin the construction of a new and prosperous homeland. We have announced in the basic principles of the DRA, in our laws and policies, that if anyone in Afghanistan spreads anti-Islamic propaganda, then he or she will be severely punished according to the law. [applause]

The aspirations of our revolution [words indistinct]. Here, freely as in a jirga, whoever opposes me should bravely stand up and say so. They will state their case; I will state mine. We will then vote and await the decisions of the comrades.

What are our aims? We want every peasant family in Afghanistan to have its own land and the family itself should work on its land. The state will provide fertilizer, seed, tractors, water, and other needs of the peasants. The state will buy their surplus produce at a reasonable price and will find a market for their produce. Afghanistan has more than 200 million jireb of land, (?bare) land which should be irrigated from the lives of our poor and unfortunate peasants who have no clothes. Their food -- you know what it is -- and their home is a cave. [Words indistinct] [applause]

One simple question: Is this contrary to Islam? Here mawlawis [religious leaders] are present; we have other mawlawis. We will hold a jirga or a grand council of our mawlawis and mullahs from inside Afghanistan, but our ears should not be toward Iran and Pakistan, waiting to hear what they are saying. We have our own clergy, ulema, mawlawis, and mullahs. [applause] Why we should accept the fetwa [judicial or religious judgment] of foreign countries? Isn't it true that the greatest Islamic ulema and clergy came from Afghanistan?

We want our peasants to have schools near their villages and homes. We want them to be literate, to know more about religious matters, life, and the problems of the world. Is this against Islam? We want our peasants to have a hospital in their village. [Passage indistinct] the workers should have work, factories should be built, underground resources should be exploited. Our mountains are full of resources, whatever you want. If we exploit our mountains, by our workers, by the arms of our people, we will have billions and billions of resources in our country.

We do not prohibit ownership. Whoever said that anyone wants to prohibit ownership in Afghanistan is a traitor to the cause of Afghanistan. [applause] It is the right of the people of Afghanistan. Respecting the family is one of our sacred and humane duties, [word indistinct]. [applause]

If we have nice cities, railways -- which would extend from Kabul to Herat, Balkh, Jalalabad [words indistinct].

Brother compatriots, the DRA is not weak. We now have powerful Armed Forces. It is true that 2 years ago we were weak; the state was weak. Now, however, we with our own Armed Forces can struggle against the enemies of Afghanistan. [applause]

If we today extend our human, Islamic, Afghan, and honest hand to our brother countrymen who have fled to mountains as a result of the oppression of Amin and the instigations of our enemies, it is not because of fear of (?weakness). [applause] No power in the world can divert us from the path of the revolution, which we have chosen.

The victory of the revolution, by the will of God and by the will of the people, is certain. [applause]

Now, neither Pakistan nor the United States -- with its great international power -- can dare to look with evil intentions on an inch of the sacred territory of Afghanistan. [passage indistinct]

The prime minister and the foreign minister have returned to Kabul from the Nonaligned Conference in Delhi. In a report given to me, it was (?stated) that the position of Afghanistan is very (?honorable and successful).

We were informed that the rebels are in this or that village; we knew their exact position, but we did not do anything against them. We did not use guns, rifles, or aircraft because we knew that if five mercenaries, plunderers, or thieves were going to be killed, hundreds of innocent children, mothers, and fathers might also be (?injured).

But it is now time to end all this and to unite with each other through meetings, discussions, and jirga. [applause]

Brother compatriots, we want peace and brotherhood for all the people of revolutionary Afghanistan -- free and independent Afghanistan. [applause]

What is our foreign policy? Because the people of Afghanistan are naturally peace-loving, so the foreign policy of the DRA is also peace-loving and peaceful. We want to have good political and friendly relations, based on the policy of peaceful co-existence, with all people of the world, especially with the Muslim people of the world. [applause]

The people of Pakistan and Iran are the brothers of the people of Afghanistan. We want these people and nations to live together in friendship and brotherhood as two good neighbors.

We have issued two statements: We proposed to the Governments of Iran and Pakistan that, as brothers and through political and peaceful discussions, we can solve all problems without exception, normalize our relations, solve the problem of refugees -- you yourself [as heard] explained that it is Pakistan who prevents our compatriots from returning. Let our people return to their poor country [words indistinct].

You [as heard] are accustomed to spreading false propaganda. And because you tell lies every day through your radios, the Afghans do not believe you anymore. A guarantee should be given. An international guarantee should exist. An agreement should be signed to cease intervention and aggression against each other. [applause]

We have never instigated an Iranian against Iran or a Pakistani against Pakistan. And the Pakistani Government should also never use our oppressed people, some of whom are illiterate and do not know the facts, against their homeland and people. The same goes for Iran because this is the ancient policy of the English and the imperialists, headed by U.S. imperialism. I once again repeat that we want to live with all people of the world, especially the Muslims of the world and in particular the Muslims of Iran and Pakistan, in an atmosphere of friendship and good-neighborliness and brotherhood. [applause]

The Soviet Union, as you yourself [as heard] described in your speeches, is an honest and disinterested friend. [applause] Compatriots, an Afghan will never, according to his character, extend his hand to someone who is not honest. [applause]

When international guarantees are given, when our relations with our neighbors become so good that aggression ceases, when our freedom, national independence, national sovereignty, and territorial integrity are guaranteed and foreign aggression is stopped against Afghans, that is when the limited contingents of the Soviet Union, assured of the independence of Afghanistan, will return to their peaceful country.

Allow me, esteemed brothers, to say in conclusion: Long live peace, brotherhood, and tranquillity all over Afghanistan. [applause]

KESHTMAND COMMENTS ON NONALIGNED CONFERENCE

LD171609 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1600 GMT 16 Mar 83

[BAKHTAR interview with Prime Minister Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand -- date, place not given]

[Excerpts] [Question] Dear Comrade Soltan 'Ali Keshtmand, you led the Afghan delegation to the Seventh Nonaligned Conference held in New Delhi. Please tell us, what were the most important questions at the conference?

[Answer] The Nonaligned Summit Conference faced various issues. First of all, the Seventh Nonaligned Conference faced the vital issue of how to make more effective the struggle for strengthening peace and international security, removing the danger of nuclear war, and slowing the arms race. As a result of the aggressive policies of imperialism, particularly the warmongering adventurist policies of U.S. imperialism, hotbeds of tensions have been created in our world from Asia to Africa, from Latin America to Europe. In recent years, U.S. imperialism has tried with all its strength to destroy detente and endanger international peace and security. On this matter, we can give many examples.

U.S. imperialism also is interfering in the internal affairs of our country -- the DRA -- and spares no provocations and aggressions against our country's national sovereignty. U.S. imperialism has organized and is continuing an undeclared war against our country. As a matter of fact, the inspirer and initiator of the aggression unleashed against our country from Pakistani territory is the United States, who, after training, organizing, and arming the bandits and robber counterrevolutionaries, is exporting them to our country for murder, arson, destruction, and plunder. This looting imperialist and reactionary policy against our country has been condemned by the people of Afghanistan and the progressive forces of the world.

The conference was faced with the issue of how to overcome the policy of war and the creation of tension. Earlier, most of the nonaligned countries had -- individually -- expressed their views to the effect that Soviet proposals for disarmament and for preventing all kinds of nuclear tests and the recent proposal of this country -- reflected in the statement of the political committee of the Warsaw Pact -- is regarded as a satisfactory and practical means of self-defense and of preventing the outbreak of a nuclear war.

[Question] Comrade Keshtmand, U.S. imperialism and international reaction, prior to the Delhi meeting, used all means, including blackmail and pressure. They wanted to divert the Nonaligned Movement from its fundamental principles and from the most important and crucial questions facing it; and by devising [words indistinct] which had no relevance to the Nonaligned Movement to destroy the movement from within and damage its unity. What is your view in this respect?

[Answer] Imperialism really tried to destroy the unity of the Nonaligned Movement and wanted to prevent it from considering crucial and fundamental issues of the present world and to divert the attention of the movement to other issues. However, imperialism was unable to achieve its aims. Despite the efforts of a number of reactionary regimes -- members of the Nonaligned Movement -- who wanted to impose other issues on the Delhi conference and, by devising such issues, to interfere in the internal affairs of the countries, they were not very successful. The principled stand which the conference should have taken was to a large extent realized.

The fundamental issue was that the anti-imperialist character of the movement is to be maintained. As far as the DRA was concerned, much effort had been made to secure the unity of the Nonaligned Movement. The DRA delegation at the New Delhi conference actively cooperated in securing this value.

[Question] Comrade Keshtmand, how do you evaluate the role of India as the chairman of the Seventh Nonaligned Conference?

[Answer] We consider India's role to be positive. India, with patience and endurance, tried to safeguard the unity of the Nonaligned Movement and to convene the conference successfully.

[Question] During your stay in India, you held talks and meetings with a number of heads of state or government of the nonaligned countries and a number of the international figures. Please give us information about these meetings?

[Answer] As a whole, we can consider these meetings valuable in strengthening DRA relations with these countries.

KARACHI CITES REPORTS ON USSR TROOP INCREASES

BK170418 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] According to reports reaching London from Kabul, the Soviet Union has increased its troops in Afghanistan. Airports at Mazar-e Sharif, Faizabad, Qondus, Baghlan, (Chendan), and Kabul are being used solely for military purposes. Soviet plane arrivals at these airports have increased during the last few weeks. The planes carry Soviet troops, ammunition, and military equipment. These reports also say Soviet forces are establishing new military bases in Qondus, Parwan, Baghlan, (Chowkchan), and Herat Provinces.

According to a report received from Nangarhar Province, a Soviet passenger plane allegedly was shot down in (Vagal) village in the (Nur) Valley. According to the report, 69 soldiers were killed in the incident, including 26 female soldiers.

Meanwhile, another report says Afghan mujahidin destroyed six tanks during the attack by Soviet-Karmal soldiers on their strongholds at (Tore Obe) in (Ali Sher) District of Khost on 11 March. The attacking troops also suffered heavy casualties.

EYEWITNESSES TESTIFY AT HEARING ON AFGHANISTAN

PM171249 Oslo AFTENPOSTEN in Norwegian 15 Mar 83 p 4

[Ulf Andenaes report: "Soviet Union's Aim Is To Eliminate Groups in Afghan Population"]

[Text] "There are clear indications that the Soviet Union has the extermination of major population groups as its conscious strategy in Afghanistan.

"In large areas, the civilian inhabitants are methodically mowed down during attacks or driven out from their homes and the basis for their lives is systematically destroyed. I myself have been able to observe this on my journeys in the country. Whole villages are razed and all inhabitants over large areas are destroyed."

The internationally known journalist and Afghanistan expert, Edward Girardet, gave this description of the situation in the war-torn country at the Afghanistan hearing currently taking place in Folkets Hus in Oslo. "In some places, the occupying forces are trying to gain control in other ways," he added. "Local communities, for example, are told that they will be spared in return for at least passive support for the Kabul regime."

Some 8 to 10 million of Afghanistan's estimated 12 to 15 million inhabitants live in areas completely outside the control of the Kabul regime, Girardet said.

A French expert, Ricardo Fraile, discussed the question of chemical warfare. He stressed the practical difficulties in investigating reports of the use of chemical weapons in as inaccessible an area as Afghanistan. "But we are receiving new reports the whole time and, from the descriptions we have been given, we are forced to reach the conclusion that chemical weapons are being used. We can say this with almost total certainty. The signs are growing ever stronger. Information from completely different parts of the country describes exactly the same type of symptoms and event, despite the fact that the sources have had no opportunity to contact each other," Fraile said.

The Kabul regime refused to allow international commissions of investigation to visit the country to look into the charges of chemical warfare, giving as its reason that these charges are based on accusations from imperialist states.

A young Afghan engineer, Abdur Rahim, described how the collaboration between the Soviet Army and the Afghan Government forces works: "On military operations, it has been usual for the Afghan Government soldiers to be sent out first, while Soviet tanks and troops follow immediately behind. In this way, the government soldiers are forced to fight. The Russians know they are reluctant and do not rely on them."

Engineer Rahim was taking part in the construction of an irrigation installation on the Helmand River in southern Afghanistan when the war entered his life. He witnessed how around 50 women were driven into the river by Soviet tanks. The women drowned with the chidren they were carrying. Only 3 or 4 women succeeded in crossing to the other side. Rahim soon joined the resistance movement.

Rahim said Bulgarians and Cubans are fighting on the Soviet side. Bulgarian troops are stationed in the Mazar-e Sharif area in the north, for example, where they are protecting gas and oil installations. Many Cuban soldiers have fallen in the fighting around the City of Herat in the western part of the country.

In Soviet-controlled areas, many young people are sent to the Soviet Union against their parents' will. Once there, they undergo political indoctrination. Later they are sent back to Afghanistan and organized in a movement called the "Fatherland Front" whose tasks is to spread fear and destruction among the opponents of the regime.

A female French doctor, Laurence Laumonier, described what it is like to do medical aid work in Afghanistan.

"In 14 months, I did not meet a single doctor outside my own team in Nureatan, a province in the Northeast, where I stayed most of the time. Around 35 French doctors are working in Afghanistan, but their working conditions are growing ever worse. One of my colleagues, Dr Phillippe Augoyard, was captured by the regime's supporters last year. The latest news of him is that he has been sentenced to 8 years' imprisonment," Dr Laumonier said. She called on other countries to apply pressure to have him freed, since his case must be seen as an important matter of principle for medical aid work in general.

"The health situation is bad. Even quite simple diseases are claiming large numbers of human lives because of the shortage of medical aid and the people's reduced resistance," she said.

At times, bombing raids are intensive. "I saw women and children leave their villages early in the morning to find cover in the mountains and they only returned in the evening.

"The small hospitals we set up were clearly marked with international medical symbols. An experienced colleague warned us about the markings and said that they would only make us an obvious bombing target. And quite right -- the small hospitals turned out to be particularly prone to Soviet attacks."

An Afghan village chief, Dorr Mohammad, described how his village was attacked. All the cattle were slaughtered, houses were destroyed, and the population fled into the mountains. There was not a single Afghan among the attackers; they were all Russians, he said. One woman sought refuge in the mosque, but they dragged her out and killed her, he said. Mohammad himself is paralyzed in the left side of his body since being hit in the head by a bullet.

The Afghanistan hearing will continue today and tomorrow.

50 'SABOTEURS' ARRESTED IN FARYAB PROVINCE

LD171619 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1430 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] Officers and men of sarandoy and the border force have recently crushed counter-revolutionaries in the region of Kaman, Andkhoy District, Faryab Province, and have arrested 50 of these saboteurs (?along with) Pahlawan Bang-e and Ghulam. [as heard]

Some 46 weapons, a large quantity of ammunition, antitank mines, and three motorcycles were seized from these saboteurs.

BRIEFS

KABUL AIRPORT EXPANSION -- A contract to extend the runway of Kabul Airport, add on to the present terminal, and construct a new terminal for domestic flights was signed this morning by the Ministry of Public Works and the Ministry of Transportation. The present capacity of the airport terminal, which is 100 passengers per hour, will be increased to 300 passengers per hour. The new terminal for domestic flights will have a capacity of 100 passengers per hour. The cost of domestic materials -- 950 million afghanis -- will be borne by the state development plan; imported materials will be financed by a credit from the USSR. Construction work will begin on 21 March and will take 3 years to complete. [Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 17 Mar 83 LD]

GANDHI COMMENTS ON SOVIET NUCLEAR POWER OFFER

BK1714..3 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] A technical team has returned to New Delhi from the Soviet Union after holding discussions with the Soviet specialists on setting up a nuclear power station in India. Giving this information in the Rajya Sabha in reply to a question, Prime Minister Mrs Gandhi said that the government would need to examine the report of the technical team from various angles before taking a final decision.

The prime minister said an agreement was concluded between India and France in November last by which France has replaced America and agreed to supply enriched uranium for Tarapur atomic power station within the framework of 1963 cooperation agreement with the United States. Mrs Gandhi said the offer from the Soviet Union and the agreement with France are not related.

HOME MINISTER ON RESTORATION OF PEACE IN ASSAM

BK171623 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] The home minister, Mr Sethi, assured the Rajya Sabha today that no effort will be spared in ensuring that affected persons in Assam are rehabilitated at the earliest and that peace is restored in the state. He was making a statement at the beginning of a 4-hour debate on the Assam situation in the house.

Mr Sethi said that the state government is fully seized of the situation and is vigilant. The state government has decided to order an administrative inquiry into the recent incident. It will, however, take some time before complete normalcy is restored.

The home minister told the house that over 310,000 people are now in various refugee camps in the state and nearly 34,000 have gone over to West Bengal and Arunachal Pradesh. He said steps have been taken to bring back the refugees as early as possible.

Mr Sethi appealed to all concerned to assist the state government in quickly restoring the confidence of all communities, ethnic groups, and the people of Assam.

Later, replying to the discussion, Mr Sethi said that the government is committed to the detection of foreign nationals who came to the state during 1971 and afterward. Steps have been taken to appoint tribunals for the purpose.

Mr Sethi said as soon as normalcy is restored in the state government will start negotiations with the agitation leaders. He said several steps have been taken to check further infiltration. A number of checkposts have been increased particularly in the Riverine border areas.

Referring to the demands by some opposition parties, Mr Sethi said there is no question of dissolution of assembly or dismissal of the ministry in Assam. Such an action will mean submission to the reign of terror.

Mr Sethi justified the decision of the Election Commission to hold elections without revising the 1979 role.

GENEVA TALKS ON AFGHANISTAN TO RESUME 11 APRIL

BK180232 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Mar 83

[Text] Diego Cordovez, personal representative of the UN secretary general on the Afghanistan issue, will resume indirect talks on Afghanistan in Geneva on 11 April. A UN spokesman said yesterday that Cordovez will have separate talks with the Pakistani foreign minister and the foreign minister of the Karmal regime and also will have contacts with the Iranian representative.

This new round of talks on Afghanistan is being held following the exchange of views which Cordovez had in Islamabad, Kabul, and Tehran.

BANGLADESH ENVOY SAYS AFGHAN POLICY UNCHANGED

BK161735 Karachi Domestic Service in English 1700 GMT 16 Mar 83

[Text] The Bangladesh ambassador in Pakistan, Mr Ghulam Dastgir, said in Karachi today that his country's stand on the Afghanistan issue remains unchanged.

Talking informally to newsmen, he said Bangladesh stood for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan. He said they have been demanding the withdrawal of foreign troops at all international forums, including the nonaligned meeting. There has been no change in the policy of Dhaka on this issue, he maintained.

He was commenting on the reported statement of the Chief Martial Law Administrator Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammad Ershad on the normalization of relations with Afghanistan.

The Bangladesh ambassador said the foreign secretary had already briefed the Pakistani ambassador in Dhaka on this issue. He also expected to meet Pakistan's foreign minister in a day or two to explain the position to him.

PRODUCTION MINISTER MEETS SOVIET DELEGATION

BK170850 Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu 0200 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] Establishing auxiliary industries of the Pakistan steel mills in the private sector was considered during the talks between the federal minister for production, Lieutenant General Said Qadira, and the visiting high-level Soviet delegation in Karachi yesterday.

The Soviet minister for maintenance and special construction, B.V. Bakin, who is leading the delegation, said his country is ready to provide all-round assistance in all fields to promote and strengthen economic relations with Pakistan. The minister for production stressed the early supply of machinery for hot-strip and cold-rolling mills of the Pakistan steel mills to complete the entire project by March of next year.

PETROLEUM MINISTER EXPLAINS OIL PRICE POLICY

LD171841 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] Petroleum Minister Mohammad Gharazi returned home today from London where he led Iran's delegation to the OPEC oil ministers' conference.

On his return to Tehran, the minister spoke to our correspondent about the result of the OPEC meeting in London and the agreement reached on production quotas.

[Begin recording] [Gharazi] As you know, during this year -- I mean during the year 21 March 1982 to 20 March 1983, our oil production reached 3.2 million barrels a day. We wanted a production quota of 2.7 million barrels a day for Iran. We wanted Saudi Arabia's production to be reduced to 4.7 million barrels a day.

During the London meeting, Iran was asked to accept a quota of 2.14 million barrels. We were told that the Saudis wanted a quota of 5 million barrels a day and could not accept anything less. To maintain solidarity within OPEC and in order not to give others any excuses, we accepted a quota of 2.14 million barrels following our contacts with officials of the Islamic Republic and after obtaining their approval.

[Question] Could you possibly tell us more about the oil price and at what price we will be selling our oil?

[Answer] I would like to repeat what I have already explained to our friends here about the reason for Iran's low price on the international oil market. As a result of the imposed war and pressures brought upon us at Khark Island, we have no choice but to pay more for shipment, both for insurance and transportation. I said this last time that in order to remain competitive, we have to make sure that the price of Iran's oil at Tokyo Port is identical to that of Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. That is because, as a result of the oil glut, our customers are not willing to pay for extra insurance and shipment at Khark Island as direct effects of the imposed war.

The topic also was discussed at the London meeting. I discussed it with other OPEC ministers and no one protested. That was because what we explained was a reality. Our price has in no way been less than OPEC's base price. What we had was extra costs resulting from the War. In the past, our price was $34, but as a result of the war costs, we sold our oil at slightly less. Now the market has imposed a price of $29 -- a price which because of procedure [as heard] or what is our just right we cannot accept. However, we will inform our customers what reduction we can offer to cover for extra war costs. This reduction will correspond to the war costs which we will determine in the next few days. These costs fluctuate. When war pressure in the region is high, those costs are a little more. When pressure is reduced, the price is a little less. We will inform our customers about the situation in the course of next week. [end recording]

ARMED FORCES JOINT STAFF COMMUNIQUE NO 1,250

LD171731 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Communique No 1,250 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] In His exalted name. During the past 24 hours, fighting continued on the country's western fronts with exchanges of artillery and other heavy weapons' fire. Islam's combatants opened fire on enemy positions and fortifications and destroyed two enemy artillery pieces, one mortar, one troop carrying truck, and one engineering vehicle. A considerable number of enemy soldiers were killed or wounded and Saddamist troop movements were halted.

On the Marivan front, thanks to artillery fire opened by our Ground Forces on the positions of the Iraqi forces in the Kuhlan, Kuhmaro, and Khormal regions, several trenches and observation posts of the Saddamists were destroyed and a number of their servicemen were killed.

At 1930 on 15 March, the Saddamist hirelings on one of the western fronts embarked on a series of offensive operations and deployment of forces, but Islam's victorious heroes, while enjoying complete battle and firepower superiority, smashed the desperate move by the Saddamists and crushed them. These operations continued until 2300 that evening.

Also, the criminal Saddamist forces opened artillery fire on one of the villages of Qasr-e Shirin and martyred one and wounded two of our dear compatriots.

On the southern fronts, Islam's mighty combatants continued to consolidate and safeguard their defensive positions and, while controlling the Saddamist enemy's moves and operations, silenced their fire.

On the Abadan and Khorramshahr fronts, Islam's combatants opened fire on Iraqi positions, units, and oil installations and silenced their fire. Our forces set oil installations in Al-Faw ablaze, destroyed four of the Zionist enemy's light and heavy weapons emplacements, and killed or wounded a number of his servicemen.

Abadan and Khorramshahr yesterday continued to be subjected to artillery and heavy weapons fire by the Saddamist hirelings. As a result, part of the hospital in the City of Abadan and seven houses were destroyed. Two of our dear compatriots were martyred and another seven were wounded.

During the past 24 hours, all air raids by the Saddamist hirelings were repulsed and neutralized by the selfless combatants of the Air Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[Signed] Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran

KHOMEYNI RECEIVES SUPREME COURT PRESIDENT 17 MAR

LD171504 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 17 Mar 83

[Text] Supreme Court President Musavi-Ardabili this morning was received by Imam Khomeyni, leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He reported on the activities of the judicial system and the headquarters in charge of implementing the imam's decree.

After this meeting, in an interview about the issues discussed in the presence of the imam, the Supreme Court president said: On the eve of the fifth spring of freedom, I was received by the imam to present a report on issues within my responsibility, including a report on the activities of the headquarters in charge of implementing the imam's decree and the dispatch of delegations to various parts of the country and the results of their work which was very good, as well as the fact that there have not been very many violations.

Concerning the problems faced by the country's judicial system, he said: Following the imam's decree, great attempts have been made to improve the situation of the judiciary to such an extent that up to the year starting 21 March 1983 there has not been a single verdict issued contrary to religious law.

Musavi-Ardabili added: Another issue which was discussed with the imam of the nation was the religious pronouncement that he made, ordering appointed judges not to view issues according to their previous vocational training, while the Islamic Consultative Assembly, with the approval and permission of the Council of Guardians, has granted this permission to the judges.

Concerning this issue, the imam of the nation said: Everybody must observe any bill approved by the Islamic Consultative Assembly and confirmed and endorsed by the Council of Guardians.

Our correspondent asked: Did his great eminence the imam issue any new orders on the eve of the new year about releasing prisoners?

The Supreme Court president said: Thank God, the decree of amnesty which was issued by his great eminence the imam in Bahman [21 January to 19 February] was very comprehensive and covered many prisoners. Nevertheless, on the occasion of the new year, another list of some other prisoners has been prepared which has also been approved by his great eminence the imam, and, God willing, they will be released.

NVOI URGES GOVERNMENT TO REASSESS AFGHAN STANCE

TA151605 [Editorial Report] The clandestine National Voice of Iran in Persian at 1730 GMT on 14 March carries a commentary entitled: "Mercenaries of Imperialism Are Lifting the Veils." It says: Recently, a press conference was held in Kabul attended by domestic and foreign correspondents. At this press conference, two counterrevolutionary mercenaries, one a French doctor and the other a so-called Islamic mujahidin, once more exposed the falsehoods of imperialist and reactionary circles, the overt interventions by imperialist countries and the region's reaction in Afghanistan's affairs, and the antihuman crimes of the bands affiliated with the Afghan counterrevolution.

The French doctor termed an absolute lie the issue of the use of chemical weapons by the Afghan Army, about which a tumult has been raised by imperialist and reactionary circles.

Afterward, the so-called Islamic mujahidin told the correspondents that his group was equipped with weapons that arrived from Iran and Pakistan. He also confessed that, in addition to arms, printed manifestos used to also be brought to the camp of the counterrevolutionaries from Iran. He added: We members of the so-called Jami'yat-e Eslami of Afghanistan used to receive military training in Iran and Pakistan.

"The Iranian people cannot accept that certain responsible officials in our country, under whatever guise, interfere in the internal affairs of a neighboring independent country -- in the internal affairs of a country that so far has not committed the slightest offense against our republic and that is actually pursuing a stance that supports and backs the Islamic Republic of Iran. The people demand that interference in the affairs of independent and democratic Afghanistan be terminated and that further enemies not be created for revolutionary Iran in the international arena. It is in the interest of the revolution and our homeland that the government reassess its stance and policy regarding Afghanistan and that it deal with that emancipated and anti-imperialist country from a position of friendship and neighborliness."